

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

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1. A method for controlling a telephone network for telephony based remote location monitoring, comprising:

responsive to receiving a caller request to listen only to a remote location telephony device, allocating a listen only channel between a caller telephony device and said remote location telephony device;

activating a microphone at said remote location telephony device via said listen only channel;

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streaming audio detected at said microphone via said listen only channel to said caller telephony device, such that said telephone network enables a caller to monitor a remote location through said remote location telephony device with minimized allocation of telephone network resources.

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2. The method according to claim 1 for controlling a telephone network for telephony based remote location monitoring, further comprising:

requesting authorization for said caller to listen only at said remote location telephony

5 device;

responsive to at least one from among said remote location telephony device and a user at said remote location telephony device authorizing a listen only communication, activating said microphone at said remote location telephony device and streaming said audio detected at said
10 microphone to said caller telephony device.

3. The method according to claim 1 for controlling a telephone network for telephony based remote location monitoring, further comprising:

15 responsive to receiving said caller request to listen only to a plurality of remote location telephony devices by rotating said listen only channel among said plurality of remote location telephony devices, monitoring a current time period that said listen only channel is allocated between said caller telephony device and said remote location telephony device;

20 responsive to said current time period exceeding a rotation time limit, deallocating said listen only channel between said caller telephony device and said remote location telephony

device; and

reallocating said listen only channel between said caller telephony device and a next remote location telephony device from among said plurality of remote location telephony devices.

4. The method according to claim 1 for controlling a telephone network for telephony based remote location monitoring, further comprising:

responsive to receiving said caller request to listen only to a plurality of remote location telephony device simultaneously, allocating a separate listen only channel between each of said plurality of remote location telephony devices and said caller telephony device.

5. The method according to claim 1 for controlling a telephone network for telephony based remote location monitoring, further comprising:

responsive to receiving a caller request to talk only to said remote location telephony device while said listen only channel is allocated, deallocating said listen only channel and allocating a talk only channel.

6. The method according to claim 1 for controlling a telephone network for telephony based remote location monitoring, further comprising:

responsive to receiving a caller request to end said call, deallocating said listen only

5 channel.

7. A system for controlling a telephone network for telephony based remote location monitoring, comprising:

10 a telephone network for allocating communication channels between a caller telephony device and a remote location telephony device;

said telephone network further comprising:

15 means, responsive to receiving a caller request to listen only to said remote location telephony device, for allocating a listen only channel between said caller telephony device and said remote location telephony device;

20 means for activating a microphone at said remote location telephony device via said listen only channel;

means for streaming audio detected at said microphone via said listen only channel to said caller telephony device.

8. The system according to claim 7 for controlling a telephone network for telephony based

5 remote location monitoring, said telephone network further comprising:

means for requesting authorization for said caller to listen only at said remote location telephony device;

10 means, responsive to at least one from among said remote location telephony device and a user at said remote location telephony device authorizing a listen only communication, for activating said microphone at said remote location telephony device and streaming said audio detected at said microphone to said caller telephony device.

15 9. The system according to claim 7 for controlling a telephone network for telephony based remote location monitoring, said telephone network further comprising:

means, responsive to receiving said caller request to listen only to a plurality of remote location telephony devices by rotating said listen only channel among said plurality of remote
20 location telephony devices, for monitoring a current time period that said listen only channel is allocated between said caller telephony device and said remote location telephony device;

means, responsive to said current time period exceeding a rotation time limit, for deallocating said listen only channel between said caller telephony device and said remote location telephony device; and

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means for reallocating said listen only channel between said caller telephony device and a next remote location telephony device from among said plurality of remote location telephony devices.

- 10 10. The system according to claim 7 for controlling a telephone network for telephony based remote location monitoring, said telephone network further comprising:

means, responsive to receiving said caller selection to listen only to a plurality of remote location telephony device simultaneously, for allocating a separate listen only channel between
15 each of said plurality of remote location telephony devices and said caller telephony device.

11. The system according to claim 7 for controlling a telephone network for telephony based remote location monitoring, said telephone network further comprising:

20 means, responsive to receiving a caller selection to talk only to said remote location telephony device while said listen only channel is allocated, for deallocating said listen only

channel and allocating a talk only channel.

12. The system according to claim 7 for controlling a telephone network for telephony based remote location monitoring wherein said telephone network comprises at least one from among a wireless communication network, a public switched telephone network, and an Internet based communication network.

13. A computer program product for controlling a telephone network for telephony based remote location monitoring, comprising:

a recording medium;

means, recorded on said recording medium, for allocating a listen only channel between a caller telephony device and a remote location telephony device, responsive to receiving a caller request to listen only to said remote location telephony device;

means, recorded on said recording medium, for activating a microphone at said remote location telephony device via said listen only channel;

means, recorded on said recording medium, for streaming audio detected at said microphone via said listen only channel to said caller telephony device.

14. The computer program product according to claim 13 for controlling a telephone network for telephony based remote location monitoring, further comprising:

5 means, recorded on said recording medium, for requesting authorization for said caller to listen only at said remote location telephony device;

means, recorded on said recording medium, for activating said microphone at said remote location telephony device and streaming said audio detected at said microphone to said caller
10 telephony device, in response to at least one from among said remote location telephony device and a user at said remote location telephony device authorizing said listen only communication.

15. The computer program product according to claim 13 for controlling a telephone network for telephony based remote location monitoring, further comprising:

15 means, recorded on said recording medium, for monitoring a current time period that said listen only channel is allocated between said caller telephony device and said remote location telephony device, in response to receiving said caller request to listen only to a plurality of remote location telephony devices by rotating said listen only channel among said plurality of
20 remote location telephony devices;

means, recorded on said recording medium, for deallocating said listen only channel between said caller telephony device and said remote location telephony device, in response to said current time period exceeding a rotation time limit; and

5 means, recorded on said recording medium, for reallocating said listen only channel between said caller telephony device and a next remote location telephony device from among said plurality of remote location telephony devices.

16. The computer program product according to claim 13 for controlling a telephone network
10 for telephony based remote location monitoring, further comprising:

means, recorded on said recording medium, for allocating a separate listen only channel between each of a plurality of remote location telephony devices and said caller telephony device, responsive to receiving said caller request to listen only to said plurality of remote
15 location telephony device simultaneously.

17. The computer program product according to claim 13 for controlling a telephone network for telephony based remote location monitoring, further comprising:

20 means, recorded on said recording medium, for deallocating said listen only channel and allocating a talk only channel, in response to receiving a caller request to talk only to said remote

location telephony device while said listen only channel is allocated.

18. The computer program product according to claim 13 for controlling a telephone network for telephony based remote location monitoring, further comprising:

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means, recorded on said recording medium, for deallocating said listen only channel, responsive to receiving a caller request to end said call.

19. A method for enabling caller initiated telephony based remote location monitoring,

10 comprising:

responsive to detecting a caller selection to listen only to a remote location telephony device, sending a request to a telephone network to allocate a listen only channel between a caller telephony device and said remote location telephony device;

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receiving an audio stream from said remote location telephony device at said caller telephony device via said listen only channel while said caller continues to select to listen only to said remote location telephony device, such that a listener is enabled to initiate monitoring said remote location with minimized allocation of resources.

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20. The method according to claim 19 for enabling caller initiated telephony based remote location monitoring, further comprising:

only receiving said audio stream from said remote location telephony device if said caller
5 at said caller telephony device is authorized to listen only to said remote location telephony device.

21. The method according to claim 19 for enabling caller initiated telephony based remote location monitoring, further comprising:

10 detecting said caller selection to listen only to a remote location telephony device from a selection of a telephone number previously stored in a database accessible to said caller telephony device as a listen only telephone number.

15 22. The method according to claim 19 for enabling caller initiated telephony based remote location monitoring, further comprising:

detecting said caller selection to listen only to a remote location telephony device from a depression of a button designated as a listen only trigger button.

23. The method according to claim 19 for enabling caller initiated telephony based remote location monitoring, further comprising:

detecting said caller selection to listen only to a plurality of remote location telephony
5 devices through a rotating listen only channel; and

sending said request to said telephone network to allocate a rotating listen only channel between said caller telephony device and a plurality of remote location telephony devices.

10 24. The method according to claim 19 for enabling caller initiated telephony based remote location monitoring, further comprising:

detecting said caller selection to listen only to a plurality of remote location telephony
devices simultaneously; and

15 sending said request to said telephone network to allocate a separate listen only channel between said caller telephony device and each of said plurality of remote location telephony devices.

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25. The method according to claim 19 for enabling caller initiated telephony based remote location monitoring, further comprising:

detecting a second selection to end said listen only call; and

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sending a request to said telephone network to deallocate said listen only channel.

26. A system for enabling caller initiated telephony based remote location monitoring, comprising:

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a caller telephony device communicatively connected to a telephone network;

said caller telephony device further comprising:

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means, responsive to detecting a caller selection to listen only to a remote location telephony device, for sending a request to said telephone network to allocate a listen only channel between said caller telephony device and said remote location telephony device;

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means for receiving an audio stream from said remote location telephony device at said caller telephony device via said listen only channel while said caller continues to select to listen only to said remote location telephony device.

27. The system according to claim 26 for enabling caller initiated telephony based remote location monitoring, said caller telephony device further comprising:

5 means for only receiving said audio stream from said remote location telephony device if said caller at said caller telephony device is authorized to listen only to said remote location telephony device.

28. The system according to claim 26 for enabling caller initiated telephony based remote
10 location monitoring, said caller telephony device further comprising:

means for detecting said caller selection to listen only to a remote location telephony device from a selection of a telephone number previously stored in a database accessible to said caller telephony device as a listen only telephone number.

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29. The system according to claim 26 for enabling caller initiated telephony based remote location monitoring, said caller telephony device further comprising:

means for detecting said caller selection to listen only to a remote location telephony
20 device from a depression of a button designated as a listen only trigger button.

30. The system according to claim 26 for enabling caller initiated telephony based remote location monitoring, said caller telephony device further comprising:

means for detecting said caller selection to listen only to a plurality of remote location
5 telephony devices through a rotating listen only channel; and

means for sending said request to said telephone network to allocate a rotating listen only channel between said caller telephony device and a plurality of remote location telephony devices.

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31. The system according to claim 26 for enabling caller initiated telephony based remote location monitoring, said caller telephony device further comprising:

means for detecting said caller selection to listen only to a plurality of remote location
15 telephony devices simultaneously; and

means for sending said request to said telephone network to allocate a separate listen only channel between said caller telephony device and each of said plurality of remote location telephony devices.

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32. The system according to claim 26 for enabling caller initiated telephony based remote location monitoring, said caller telephony device further comprising:

means for detecting a second selection to end said listen only call; and

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means for sending a request to said telephone network to deallocate said listen only channel.

33. A computer program product for enabling caller initiated telephony based remote location monitoring, comprising:

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a recording medium;

means, recorded on said recording medium, for sending a request to a telephone network

15 to allocate a listen only channel between a caller telephony device and a remote location telephony device, in response to detecting a caller selection to listen only to said remote location telephony device;

means, recorded on said recording medium, for receiving an audio stream from said

20 remote location telephony device at said caller telephony device via said listen only channel while said caller continues to select to listen only to said remote location telephony device.

34. The computer program product according to claim 33 for enabling caller initiated telephony based remote location monitoring, said caller telephony device further comprising:

5 means, recorded on said recording medium, for only receiving said audio stream from said remote location telephony device if said caller at said caller telephony device is authorized to listen only to said remote location telephony device.

35. The computer program product according to claim 33 for enabling caller initiated
10 telephony based remote location monitoring, said caller telephony device further comprising:

means, recorded on said recording medium, for detecting said caller selection to listen only to a remote location telephony device from a selection of a telephone number previously stored in a database accessible to said caller telephony device as a listen only telephone number.

15 36. The computer program product according to claim 33 for enabling caller initiated telephony based remote location monitoring, said caller telephony device further comprising:

means, recorded on said recording medium, for detecting said caller selection to listen
20 only to a remote location telephony device from a depression of a button designated as a listen only trigger button.

37. The computer program product according to claim 33 for enabling caller initiated telephony based remote location monitoring, said caller telephony device further comprising:

5 means, recorded on said recording medium, for detecting said caller selection to listen only to a plurality of remote location telephony devices through a rotating listen only channel; and

means, recorded on said recording medium, for sending said request to said telephone
10 network to allocate a rotating listen only channel between said caller telephony device and a plurality of remote location telephony devices.

38. The computer program product according to claim 33 for enabling caller initiated telephony based remote location monitoring, said caller telephony device further comprising:

15 means, recorded on said recording medium, for detecting said caller selection to listen only to a plurality of remote location telephony devices simultaneously; and

means, recorded on said recording medium, for sending said request to said telephone
20 network to allocate a separate listen only channel between said caller telephony device and each of said plurality of remote location telephony devices.

39. The computer program product according to claim 33 for enabling caller initiated telephony based remote location monitoring, said caller telephony device further comprising:

5 means, recorded on said recording medium, for detecting a second selection to end said listen only call; and

means, recorded on said recording medium, for sending a request to said telephone network to deallocate said listen only channel.

10 40. A method for controlling a remote location telephony device for remote location monitoring, comprising:

detecting a listen only channel allocated to said remote location telephony device;

15 responsive to receiving a microphone activation signal from a telephone network via a listen only channel, activating a microphone at said remote location telephony device; and

20 enabling audio to stream from said microphone via said listen only channel, such that a caller at a caller telephony device connected to said listen only channel monitors a remote location in which said remote location telephony device is positioned.

41. The method according to claim 40 for controlling a remote location telephony device for remote location monitoring, further comprising:

5 receiving an identifier for said caller requesting a listen only call from said caller telephony device;

comparing said identifier with at least one authorized caller identifier; and

10 only activating said microphone at said remote location telephony device if said identifier matches with said at least one authorized caller identifier.

42. The method according to claim 40 for controlling a remote location telephony device for remote location monitoring, further comprising:

15 activating a listen only indicator to indicate that said microphone is activated.

43. A system for controlling a remote location telephony device for remote location monitoring, comprising:

20 a remote location telephony device communicatively connected to a telephone network

via a listen only channel;

a microphone connected to said remote location telephony device;

5 means, responsive to receiving a microphone activation signal from said telephone network via said listen only channel, for activating said microphone;

means for enabling audio to stream from said microphone via said listen only channel.

10 44. The system according to claim 43 for controlling a remote location telephony device for remote location monitoring, said remote location telephony device further comprising:

means for receiving an identifier for said caller requesting a listen only call from said caller telephony device;

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means for comparing said identifier with at least one authorized caller identifier; and

means for only activating said microphone at said remote location telephony device if said identifier matches with said at least one authorized caller identifier.

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45. The system according to claim 43 for controlling a remote location telephony device for remote location monitoring, said remote location telephony device further comprising:

a listen only indicator; and

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means for activating a listen only indicator when said microphone is activated.

46. A computer program product for controlling a remote location telephony device for remote location monitoring, comprising:

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a recording medium;

means, recorded on said recording medium, for detecting a listen only channel allocated to said remote location telephony device;

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means, recorded on said recording medium, for activating a microphone at said remote location telephony device, in response to receiving a microphone activation signal from a telephone network via a listen only channel; and

20 means, recorded on said recording medium, for enabling audio to stream from said microphone via said listen only channel.

47. The computer program product according to claim 46 for controlling a remote location telephony device for remote location monitoring, further comprising:

5 means, recorded on said recording medium, for receiving an identifier for said caller requesting a listen only call from said caller telephony device;

means, recorded on said recording medium, for comparing said identifier with at least one authorized caller identifier; and

10 means, recorded on said recording medium, for only activating said microphone at said remote location telephony device if said identifier matches with said at least one authorized caller identifier.

15 48. The computer program product according to claim 46 for controlling a remote location telephony device for remote location monitoring, further comprising:

means, recorded on said recording medium, for activating a listen only indicator to indicate that said microphone is activated.

49. A method for controlling a telephone network for telephony based remote location monitoring initiated by a caller, comprising:

responsive to receiving a caller request for a remote location telephony device to listen

5 only to a caller telephony device, allocating a listen only channel between said remote location telephony device and said caller telephony device;

activating a microphone at said caller telephony device via said listen only channel; and

10 streaming audio detected at said microphone via said listen only channel to said remote location telephony device, such that said telephone network enables a caller to initiate monitoring of the caller location through said remote location telephony device with minimized allocation of telephone network resources.

15 50. A method for enabling caller initiated telephony based remote location monitoring of a caller location, comprising:

responsive to detecting a caller selection for a remote location telephony device to listen

only to a caller telephony device, sending a request to a telephone network to allocate a listen

20 only channel between a caller telephony device and said remote location telephony device; and

enabling audio to stream from said microphone via said listen only channel, such that a user at a remote location accessing said remote location telephony device monitors said caller at a caller telephony device by caller request.

- 5 51. A method for controlling a remote location telephony device for remote location monitoring, comprising:

receiving a request to listen only to a caller telephony device at a remote location telephony device;

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responsive to authorizing the communication, detecting a listen only channel allocated to said remote location telephony device;

- 15 receiving an audio stream from said caller telephony device at said remote location telephony device via said listen only channel while said caller continues to select for said remote location telephony device to listen only to said caller telephony device, such that a listener is enabled to initiate monitoring of a caller location by said remote location telephony device with minimized allocation of resources.

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52. A telephony device for placing listen only calls, comprising:

a communication link for enabling said telephony device access to a telephone network;

and

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a selectable option on said telephony device, wherein responsive to said user selecting said selectable option, a request for a listen only channel is sent through said communication link to said telephone network.

10 53. The telephony device according to claim 52, wherein said selectable option comprises a depressable button dedicated to initiating said request for said listen only channel.

54. The telephony device according to claim 52, wherein said selectable option comprises a display menu selection to request said listen only channel.

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